

2017 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

65TH WYOMING
LEGISLATURE,
GENERAL
SESSION



EQUALITY STATE
POLICY CENTER



Dear Friends-

For over two decades, the Equality State Policy Center has been an advocate for Wyomingites who have historically been excluded from the governing process. Last November, I was privileged to take the helm of this respected organization and am thrilled to continue to help make our government more accessible to all Wyomingites.

In this report, you will find a snapshot of what ESPC prioritized during the 2017 Legislative Session. Our work is far from complete, but I know that together we can continue to improve the state that we love.



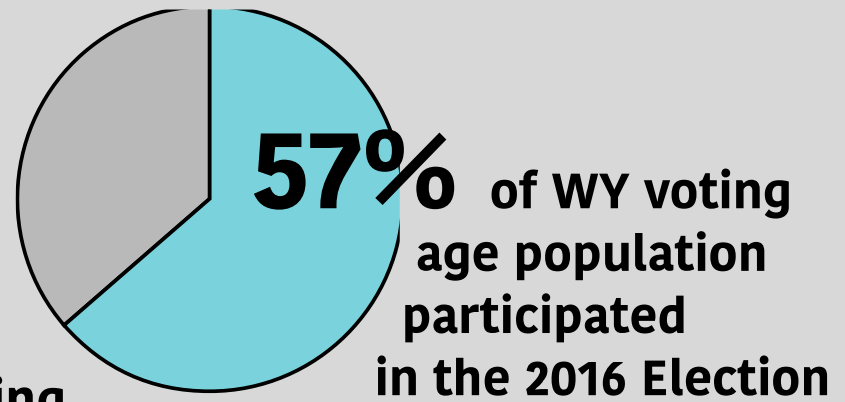
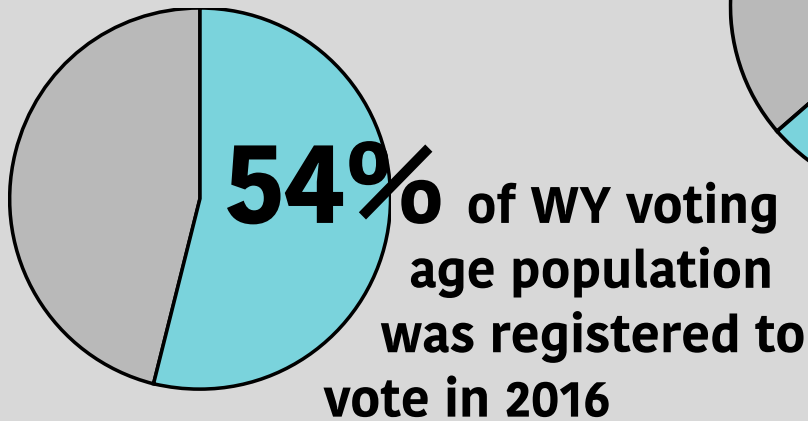
Phoebe Stoner, Executive Director



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ACCESSIBLE & TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT



▪ Automatic Restoration of the Right to Vote (HB 75)



This legislation helps to fight against voter suppression and improves rightful participation in democracy. Prior to this bill, all first time, non-violent felons had to wait 5 years after completing their sentence and go through a convoluted application process to re-gain their right to vote. **Because of this bill, non-violent felons are now granted the right to vote automatically after completing their sentence,** streamlining the process and helping them reintegrate into our democratic process.

FINAL STATUS: PASSED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)



▪ **Change in Party Affiliation (HB 106)**

Currently, Wyoming law allows voters to change their party affiliation the day of the Primary Election, when voting absentee, or when voting early. This means you can walk into the polls, decide how you want to participate, and cast a ballot accordingly. **This bill would have changed this by not allowing voters to change their party affiliation within 30 days** of the Primary Election and not allowing voters to change their party affiliation when voting absentee, voting early, or on Election Day. It is a fundamental right to register with the political party of your choice and the government should not interfere.

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)

▪ **Election Ballots (HB 68)**



Currently, absentee ballots are only counted if they are received by the time polls close on Election Day. With weather, different mail delivery times, and some elections coming down to just a handful of votes, it is important that there is a clear deadline from the sender's perspective. **This bill would have given absentee voters a clear deadline on when their vote would or would not have counted** and ensured a more accurate vote count.

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)

▪ **Permanent Absentee Voter Status (HB 46)**



This bill would have allowed voters to apply for permanent absentee voter status, allowing them to receive absentee ballots in subsequent elections rather than having to request an absentee ballot for each election. It would have allowed voters to request for their absentee ballot electronically. All of this will also save our county clerks time and money. **This bill would have made absentee voting, and thus participation in elections, more accessible.**

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)

▪ **Recording of Interim Committee Meetings (HB 276)**



This bill would have required the Legislative Service Office to record interim committee meetings and post the audio recordings within a month of the meeting for the public to access. There would have been no financial or staff implications and the recordings will also be archived. **This simple gesture of transparent government would have increased citizen access to our legislative process.**

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)

▪ **Photo ID Voting Requirement (HB167)**



Currently, if you are already registered to vote in Wyoming, you are not required to show any form of ID at the polls. If you registered by mail and are voting in your first federal election, you must provide a current ID of any sort, but this is not limited to a photo ID (ex. a utility bill or social security card would suffice). The proposed legislation would have required a current, valid photo ID to be shown to vote. **These strict requirements would have made it harder for citizens to exercise their fundamental right to cast a ballot** and tend to suppress racial minorities, seniors, and the disabled from voting.

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)

TAX BILLS & BUDGET

**\$249 million
in budget cuts**

9 bills failed in the 2017 general session to raise state revenue

▪ Severance Tax on Coal (HB 104)

This bill would have provided a decrease in severance tax on coal, **lowering it from 7% to 6 %** in hopes of stimulating the coal industry. This bill would have **cost the state** an estimated **\$27 million in revenue** per year and would have been a clear tax break to this industry.

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)

▪ Severance Tax Exemption (HB 172)

This bill would have provided an **exemption from severance tax on any new production of crude oil and natural gas** over the next five years. Wyoming cannot afford any more losses, especially from established, existing taxes that bring our state important revenue.

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

SOCIAL BILLS

 Wyoming's minimum wage is tied for the **lowest in the nation**



▪ **Minimum Wage (HB 140)**

This bill would have changed **Wyoming's minimum wage from \$5.15 to match the federal minimum wage of \$7.25**. We are currently tied with Georgia in having the lowest minimum wage in the country.

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)



▪ **American Indian Education Program (HB 76)**

This legislation will require Wyoming's Native American history to be taught in our public schools. The curriculum will be designed in consultation with our two tribes, the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapahoe. **This bill requires this essential part of Wyoming's history to be taught**, a history that many citizens are unaware of, helping to increase understanding and inclusion.

FINAL STATUS: PASSED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)



▪ **Government Nondiscrimination Act (HB 135)**

This bill would have legalized discrimination against same-sex couples and transgender people and would have made it impossible for any branch or part of the government to enact or enforce local non-discrimination ordinances and federal protections for the LGBT community. **It would have also been the most regressive and oppressive, anti-LGBT law in the nation.**

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)



▪ **Early Retirement (SF 95)**

This bill would have offered early retirement to state employees, reduced the ability to hire these positions back, and increased the Wyoming Retirement Systems unfunded liability, **potentially harming our state's pension plan.**

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

▪ **Employment Nondiscrimination (SF 153)**



This bill would have provided workplace protections including sexual orientation and gender identity - protecting LGBT workers and reducing the potential of discrimination at the workplace. Wyomingites should be hired and fired based on work performance.

FINAL STATUS: FAILED

[Actual Bill Language](#)

[Additional Media Coverage](#)

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



2017 SHAPE WYOMING GRADUATES



WHAT YOU DID TO MAKE 2017 VICTORIES POSSIBLE

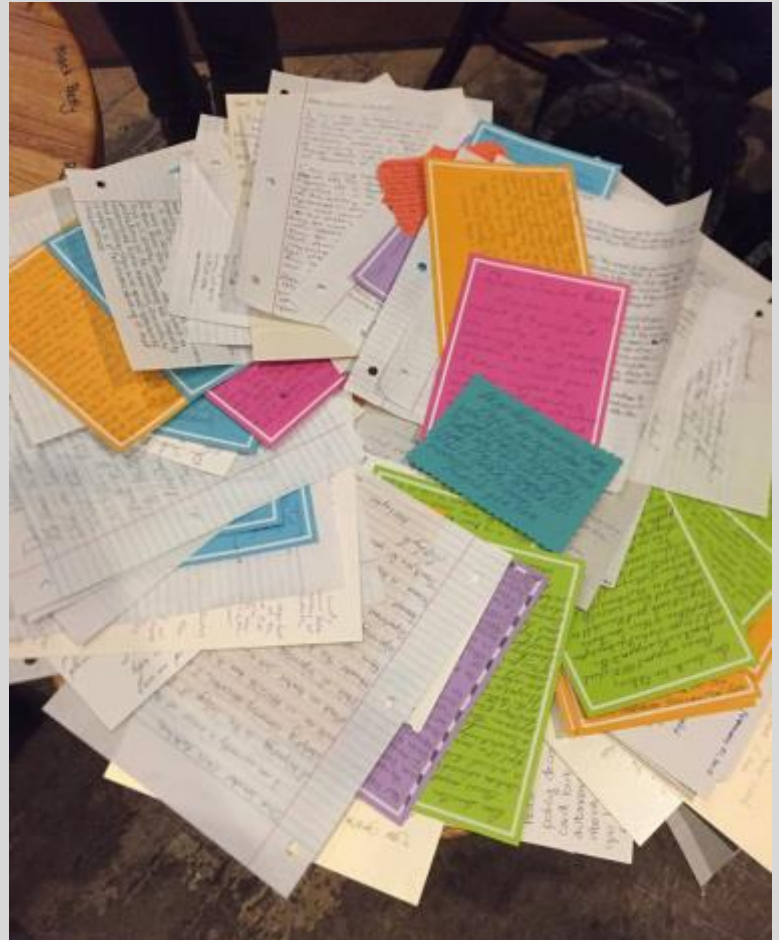
SHAPE WYOMING TRAINING



ESPC hosted its annual SHAPE training in Cheyenne on February 6th with a record-breaking **55 attendees**. Participants attended the day-long training that included multiple workshops and speakers focused on engaging with Wyoming's local and state government. We are excited to see how our SHAPE graduates shape the future of our state.

LETTER WRITING PARTIES

Over **100 people** come to our parties in Laramie and Cheyenne and over **200 letters** were written to Wyoming legislators. Letters were hand delivered to their respective lawmaker and they played an instrumental role in influencing legislation, especially the passing of **HB 75- Automatic Restoration of the right to vote**.



LOOKING FORWARD

From the ballot box to the legislative session, **ESPC is committed to making sure every Wyomingite's voice is represented** and we depend on support like yours to make this possible.

In the year ahead, we will continue to fight for legislation that creates fair, accountable government, reintroduce and widely disseminate our Legislative Accountability Project in order to hold our elected representatives accountable for their actions, and grow our efforts to train Wyomingites to be effective advocates.

YOUR SUPPORT FOR ESPC

- Alison Dunford
- Alyson Hagy
- Amber Travsky
- Amy Goicoechea
- Amy Unfried
- Andrew Carson
- Ann Hinckley
- Anne Newcomb
- Arne Jorgensen
- Audie Blevins
- Barbara Rea
- Bern Hinckley
- Bernadette Barlow
- Betty Jo Beardsley
- Betty Wolfe
- Bill Schwartz
- Billy Bensel
- Birgitt Paul
- Bob Strayer
- Carbon County Higher Education
- Carol Pascal
- Catherine Connolly
- Cathy Denman and Mike Masterson
- Charles Winnering
- Chesie Lee
- Chico Pistono
- Clare Stumpf
- Connie Wilbert
- Cory Runion
- Craig Thompson
- Dail Barbour
- Dan Brecht
- Dan Grace
- Dan Heilig
- Dan Neal
- David and Sarah Doll
- David Kathka
- David McDonald
- Dawn Decot
- Debra Bovee
- Debra Donahue
- Dee Clary
- Dee Lundberg
- Dennis and Joan Bangen
- Dennis Knight
- Don Crecelius
- Donald and Pam Geffre
- Donald Boyd
- Donna West and Paula McDaniel
- Dorothy Hackman
- Douglas Sunderland
- Ed Mosher
- Edith Heyward
- Edward Lee
- Eleanore Walker
- Eric Sandeen
- Erich and Tammy Frankland
- Eva Crane
- Frances Harris-Swanson
- Frank Prevedel
- Franz Camenzind
- George Bagby
- George Johnson
- George Jost
- George Nelson
- George Vlastos
- Gillian Malone
- Gillian Malone
- Glen Hackman
- Guy Noe
- H.R. Dieterich
- Harold Bergman
- Hollis Marriott
- Jack Lee

- James and Connie Johns
- James Brown
- James Carlson
- James E. Fitzgerald
- Jane Ifland
- Jane Kutchins
- Janice Harris
- Jason Marsden
- Jason Mincer
- Jeff & Mary Wilhelm
- Jeff Wilhelm
- Jeffrey Olson
- Jennifer & Ted Grooms
- Jennifer Tennican
- Jerold Baird
- JI Harkness
- Joe Corrigan
- John & Carol Harkness
- John Bolender
- John Knepper
- John Peacock
- Jolene Olson
- Jon Madsen
- Jordan Harper
- Joyce Harkness
- Joyce L. Harkness
- Judy Trohkimoinen
- Julie A Giacobassi
- Karen Jerger
- Kathy Hitt
- Keith Rittle
- Kenilynn Zanetti
- Kenneth Schreuder
- Kim and Susan Cannon
- Kim Cannon
- Kristina Delgado
- Kristine Barnard
- Kristy Delgado
- Lamar Empey
- Laurien Rahimi-Alangi
- Leslye and JDC Hardie
- Lillian McMath
- Linda Burt
- Linda Lillegraven
- Linda Raynolds
- Lisa Muller
- Lorraine Suulino-Klein
- Mae Kirkbride
- Marcia Kunstel
- Marcia Shanor
- Marcus Randolph
- Marguerite Herman
- Marianne Hettinger
- Mark and Mary Hillman
- Mark Houser
- Martha Martinez del Rio
- Mary Burman
- Mary D. Pridgen
- Mary Hein
- Mary Jane Luther
- Mary Throne
- Mathew Shepard
Foundation
- Megan Hayes
- Michael and Maurene
Burd
- Michael Messenger
- mickey babcock
- Mike and Cean Weber
- Mike Burd
- Mike Stech
- Mike Welch
- Molly Dow
- Nancy Geldien
- Nancy Guthrie
- Nancy Lockwood
- Natalia D. Macker
- Oma Birgenheier
- Pat Greiner
- Pat Kearney
- Patricia Greiner
- Patti Legler
- Pete Jorgensen
- Phyllis Roseberry
- Powder River Basin
Resource Council
- Priscilla Dillon
- Rev Warren Murphy
- Rl Heckert
- Robert Morris
- Robert Strayer
- Roger and Fachon Wilson
- Ron Sniffin
- Roy Walworth
- Russel Tanner
- Sandy Ksir
- Sandy Shuptrine
- Sara Neyer
- Sarah Konrad
- Shannon Anderson
- Shannon Smith
- Sharon Isabel Zumel
- Sharon Lovercheck
- Siva Sundaresan
- Solomon Sanchez
- Steff Kessler
- Steve and Teresa Wolff
- Steve Dyer
- Steve Freudenthal
- Steven Sutter
- Sue Lowe
- Sue Lowry
- Susan Ibarra
- Tara Muir
- Ted Theobald
- Teresa Wright
- Terry Jones
- Thomas Morstad
- Tim Belton
- Tom Eisenhauer
- Tom Throop
- Vickie Goodwin
- Walter Thulin
- William Nelson
- Wyoming Conference of
Electrical Workers
(International Brotherhood
of Electrical Workers,
Local 322)
- Wyoming Outdoor
Council
- Wyoming Trial Lawyers
Association
- Wyoming Trial Lawyers
Association
- Wyoming Wilderness
Association

ESPC COALITION MEMBERS

LABOR

- [AFL-CIO, Wyoming State](#)
- [Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers](#)
- [Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division](#)
- [Cheyenne Professional Firefighters, IAAF Local #279](#)
- Northwest Carpenters Council, Wyoming Chapter
- Operating Engineers, Local 800
- Southwest Wyoming Central Labor Council
- [United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters of America, Local 192](#)
- United Steelworkers Union Local 13214
- SMART Transportation Division of United Transportation Union
- [Utility Workers Union of America, Local #127](#)
- [Wyoming Building and Construction Trades Council](#)
- Wyoming Conference of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
- [Wyoming Public Employees Association](#)

CONSERVATION

- [Greater Yellowstone Coalition](#)
- [Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance](#)
- [Powder River Basin Resource Council](#)
- [Sierra Club, Wyoming Chapter](#)
- [Wyoming Outdoor Council](#)
- [Wyoming Wilderness Association](#)

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- [Wyoming Association of Churches](#)
- [Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault](#)
- [Wyoming Education Association](#)
- [Wyoming Equality](#)
- [Wyoming Trial Lawyers Association](#)
- [American Civil Liberties Union, Wyoming](#)

CONNECT WITH US

